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Church

Holy Year! CIA and Vatican?

Associated Press

TURIN, Italy — The newspaper Stampa Sera reported yesterday that the CIA had contributed \$3 million to the Roman Catholic Church's 1950 Holy Year.

A Vatican spokesman called the report "pure invention." He added, "American bishops and the faithful in the United States may have helped their pilgrims in financing their trips, but the Vatican knows nothing about it."

The newspaper, which is owned by the Fiat auto company, said its report had been based on information from U.S. government files that would be made public later this month or next under the Freedom of Information Act.

The Holy Year is a year-long celebration held every 25 years involving pilgrimages to Rome and rededication to the faith. Details of the CIA financing for the 1950 observance will be published in the weekly news

magazine Panorama later this week, the paper said.

Last week's edition of Panorama contended that the Vatican — and Pope Paul VI, while he was the substitute secretary of state for Pope Pius XII — collaborated with U.S. intelligence services from 1942 until 1959, passing on strategic Japanese secrets and aiding anti-Communist groups in Italy.

Vatican spokesman Federico Alessandrini called that report a "political fiction."